



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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TERN BANDED IN LABRADOR FOUND DEAD IN FRANCE

Another trans-Atlantic flight--and probably a "non-stop" one--has come to light. A communication received by the Biological Survey of the United States Department of Agriculture from Prof. Robert Poncy of Geneva, Switzerland, incloses a clipping from Le Chasseur Francais to the effect that M. Robert Pradier, of Port-Dauphine, La Rochelle, France, found on October 1, 1927, on the Greve de Marsilly, near La Rochelle, "a kind of black-headed gull, known in the region as 'hirondelle de mer,' or sea swallow," and carrying on its right foot an aluminum ring with the inscription: NOTIFY BIOL. SURV., and the number 548656. M. Pradier would be glad to learn, the account said, the habitat and name of this bird, as well as the date on which it was banded.

The Biological Survey, which supervises the bird-banding work in the United States and Canada, finds in its records that band No. 548656 was that of an Arctic tern (Sterna paradisaea) banded when it was between 1 and 5 days old at the Red Islands, Turnevick, Labrador, on July 22, 1927, by Oliver L. Austin, of Tuckahoe, N. Y., who at the time was on an expedition to Baffin Island in connection with which he was banding birds on their northern breeding grounds for the Biological Survey. The straight distance from Labrador to the coast of France is about 4,200 miles, a remarkable travel record for so young a bird.

This is the second trans-oceanic bird return in the records of the Survey, the first being that of a common tern (Sterna hirundo) banded as a nestling on the coast of Maine in 1913, and recovered four years later in the delta of the Niger River on the west coast of Africa. Several other remarkable distances have been traveled by birds recovered from South America. The Biological Survey has about 1,000 volunteer cooperators scattered throughout the United States and Canada who are helping in the bird-banding work, by means of which valuable data are being collected for the solution of problems regarding the migratory and other habits of wild birds.

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